

Strengths in Families Worksheet

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

These items focus on the parent's relationship with the child. To accurately assess the parent-child bond, it is important to know the attachment behaviors of the parent's culture. How does this culture display empathy? What are appropriate verbal and nonverbal cues? For example, language is highly valued in some groups, and not in others. Eye contact between parent and child is expected by some but considered disrespectful by others.

Yes No Unknown

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. The parent shows empathy for the child. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. The parent responds appropriately to the child's verbal and nonverbal signals. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. The parent is able to put the child's needs ahead of his/her own. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. When they are together, the child shows comfort in the parent. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. The parent has raised the child for a significant period of time. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. In the past, the parent has met the child's basic physical and emotional needs. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. The parent accepts some responsibility for the problems that brought the child into care or to the attention of the authorities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. The parent uses positive, nonviolent discipline. |

PARENTAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

These items reflect the quality of the parent's relationships with his/her current support system. The ways in which support systems function vary depending on culture. Because of the value European American culture places on self-sufficiency and independence, parents are expected to make their own decisions, live independently, and use the family for emotional support. Other cultures, most notably Native American cultures, expect the total group, biologically related or not, to function collectively to resolve problems. Resolution of problems may lie in the hands of the elders in other ethnic groups.

Yes No Unknown

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. The parent has positive, significant relationships with other healthy adults (e.g., spouse, parents, friends, relatives). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. The parent has a meaningful support system that can help him/her (e.g., church, job, counselor). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Extended family is nearby and capable of providing support. |

PAST SUPPORT SYSTEM

The next five items look at extended family and friendships that have been helpful in the past and can be tapped again. If the family system has demonstrated healthy coping abilities in the past consistent with their cultural norms, this may be a resource for the family in the present as well.

Yes No Unknown

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Extended family history shows family members able to help appropriately when one member is not functioning well. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Relatives came forward to offer help when the child needed placement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Relatives have followed through on commitments in the past. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. There are significant other adults, not blood relatives, who have helped in the past. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. Significant other adults (who are not blood relatives) have followed through on commitments in the past. |

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FAMILY HISTORY

These items look at the parent's history and cultural heritage. To answer the first item in this section, it is important to know to what extent the family has identified with and participated in its ethnic community.

Yes No Unknown

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. The family's ethnic, cultural, or religious heritage includes an emphasis on mutual caretaking and shared parenting in times of crisis. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. The parent's childhood history shows consistency of parental caretaker. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. The parent's history shows evidence of his/her childhood needs being met adequately. |

PARENT'S SELF-CARE

The items in this category highlight the parent's ability to function in an adult mode, according to the expectations of his/her culture. Values regarding health, hygiene, housing, education, and employment differ from culture to culture, so knowledge about the parent's culture is vital to identifying strengths.

Yes No Unknown

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20. The parent's general health is good. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 21. The parent uses medical care for self appropriately. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 22. The parent's hygiene and grooming are consistently adequate. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23. The parent has a history of stability in housing. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 24. The parent has a solid employment history. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25. The parent has graduated from high school or possesses a GED. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26. The parent has skills that contribute to employability. |

CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

Finally, these last five items focus on the functioning of the child. Again, appropriate behavior and social skills vary between cultures, so cultural knowledge is necessary.

Yes No Unknown

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 27. The child shows age-appropriate cognitive abilities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 28. The child demonstrates an age-appropriate attention span. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29. The child shows evidence of conscience development. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30. The child has appropriate social skills. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 31. Major behavioral problems are absent. |

Adapted from *Concurrent Planning: From Permanency Planning to Permanency Action*
Linda Katz, Norma Spoonemore, and Chris Robins
Seattle: Lutheran Social Services of Washington and Idaho, 1995